

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 25, and ending at page 3, line 15, as follows:

B1 --So far, a digital color camera has employed a contrast detection type focus detecting device. The contrast detection type obtains the sharpness of an object image, formed through an image pickup optical system, by evaluating an output of a solid-state image pickup element on the basis of a predetermined function for adjusting the position of the image pickup optical system on the optical axis so that the function value assumes ~~an extremal~~ a maximum value. Among the evaluation functions, for example, there are a function that adds the absolute value of the difference between the adjacent luminance signals in a focus detecting area, a function that adds the square of the difference between the adjacent luminance signals in a focus detecting area and a function that similarly processes the difference between the adjacent signals at the level of each of R, G and B image signals.--